

Opposition to HB 7192

Dear Members of the Planning and Development Committee and Any Others Whom It May Concern,

My name is Katie Logan, I am a parent of 2 public school students in the State of CT. I strongly oppose all sections pertaining to forced sharing of services, regionalization or consolidation in HB 7192, including 7 through 10, and in SB 874, including 1 through 4, and any other variation of those said sections in any bill.

The reasons for my position are as follows. My husband and I moved to our town for the schools, and the quality of our school district is what keeps us here. The locally run public schools provide a nurturing environment where engagement is high, student learning is individualized, and achievement is encouraged.

I have not seen any evidence indicating that regionalizing school districts will save money given the costs of combining resources and added transportation costs. More importantly, I have not seen any evidence establishing that regionalization will maintain or improve the quality of education in school districts.

According to a report by Hanover Research in 2014 entitled Best Practices for School Improvement Planning, a needs assessment of a failing school district is the first step that must be taken.

Also, a study conducted on K-12 Regionalization in CT of behalf of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving by Rodriguez Data Solutions LLC in May 2018 concludes that:

- regionalization or consolidation does not necessarily result in lower costs in the short or long term, and it can increase costs and negatively affect academic outcomes
- Hartford, New Haven, and Stamford school districts had higher than average per pupil expenditures notwithstanding enrollment greater than 15,000 in 2015-16
- CT districts with 2500-3000 students had the best educational outcomes with per pupil expenditures that were at average or below average levels in 2015-16
- parental involvement results in better academic outcomes and parents are more engaged when schools are small

I am concerned and confident that regionalization or the lack of, or reduction in, local control will result in larger enrollment in schools, inadequate administrative support/supervision, longer transportation times for children, lower academic scores, and increased absences. I am confident we will see a decline in the quality of the education and academic outcomes and reduced teacher and community engagement. Not to mention, another negative effect to CT's already struggling economy. We as parents, are here in CT for the school districts as they are. We will have no choice but to leave making CT less attractive to potential residents and businesses. This will worsen our State's fiscal crisis.

Please oppose the provisions in HB 7192 and SB 874 that pertain to regionalization, forced shared services, redistricting or consolidation of our school districts, penalizing districts in any form for not redistricting, sharing services or regionalizing, removing or reducing local control over school districts and any other variation in favor of those said points I oppose.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,
Katie Logan
Canterbury, CT